, so he brought a precious cup[1] worth four hundred zuz and broke it before them, and they became serious. R. Ashi made a marriage feast for his son. He saw that the Rabbis were growing very merry, so he brought a cup of white crystal and broke it before them and they became serious. The Rabbis said to R. Hamnuna Zuti at the wedding of Mar the son of Rabina: please sing us something. He said to them: Alas for us that we are to die! They said to him: What shall we respond after you? He said to them: Where is the Torah and where is the mizwah that will shield us![2]

R. Johanan said in the name of R. Simeon b. Yohai: It is forbidden to a man to fill his mouth with laughter in this world, because it says, Then will our mouth be filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.[3] When will that be? At the time when 'they shall say among the nations, The Lord hath done great things with these'.[4] It was related of Resh Lakish that he never again filled his mouth with laughter in this world after he heard this saying from R. Johanan his teacher.

Our Rabbis taught: A man should not stand up to say Tefillah either immediately after trying a case or immediately after a [discussion on a point of] halachah;[5] but he may do so after a halachic decision which admits of no discussion.[6] What is an example of a halachic decision which admits of no discussion? — Abaye said: Such a one as the following of R. Zera; for R. Zera said:[7] The daughters of Israel have undertaken to be so strict with themselves that if they see a drop of blood no bigger than a mustard seed they wait seven [clean] days after it.[8] Raba said: A man may resort to a device with his produce and bring it into the house while still in its chaff[9] so that his animal may eat of it without its being liable to tithe.[10] Or, if you like, I can say, such as the following of R. Huna. For R. Huna said in the name of R. Zeiri:[11] If a man lets blood in a consecrated animal, no benefit may he derived from it [the blood] and such benefit constitutes a trespass. The Rabbis followed the rule laid down in the Mishnah,[12] R. Ashi that of the Baraitha.[13]

Our Rabbis taught: One should not stand up to say Tefillah while immersed in sorrow, or idleness, or laughter, or chatter, or frivolity, or idle talk, but only while still rejoicing in the performance of some religious act.[14] Similarly a man before taking leave of his fellow should not finish off with ordinary conversation, or joking, or frivolity, or idle talk, but with some matter of halachah. For so we find with the early prophets that they concluded their harangues with words of praise and comfort; and so Mari the grandson of R. Huna the son of R. Jeremiah b. Abba learnt: Before taking leave of his fellow a man should always finish with a matter of halachah, so that he should remember him thereby. So we find that R. Kahana escorted R. Shimi b. Ashi from Pun, to Be-Zinyatha[15] of Babylon, and when he arrived there he said to him, Sir, do people really say that these palm trees of Babylon are from the time of Adam? — He replied: You have reminded me of the saying of R. Jose son of R. Hanina. For R. Jose son of R. Hanina said: What is meant by the verse, Through a land that no man passed through and where no man dwelt?[16] If no one passed, how could anyone dwell? It is to teach you that any land which Adam decreed should be inhabited is inhabited, and any land which Adam decreed should not be inhabited is not inhabited.[17] R. Mordecai escorted R. Shimi b. Abba from Hagronia to Be Kafi, or, as some report, to Be Dura.[18]

Our Rabbis taught: When a man prays, he should direct his heart to heaven. Abba Saul says: A reminder of this is the text, Thou wilt direct their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to attend.[19] It has been taught: Such was the custom of R. Akiba; when he prayed with the congregation, he used to cut it short and finish[20] in order not to inconvenience the congregation,[21] but when he prayed by himself, a man would leave him in one corner and find him later in another, on account of his many genuflexions and prostrations.

R. Hiyya b. Abba said: A man should always pray in a house with windows, as it says, Now his windows were open.[22]

I might say that a man should pray the whole day? It has already been expressly stated by the hand